



**DARK
HORSE
COMICS**

ALIENS™

5 (OF 6)

\$1.95 U.S.

\$2.45 Canada





ALIENS

Based on characters and situations from the
Twentieth Century Fox motion picture.

No. 5 (of 6) June, 1989

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ALIENS #5 June, 1989 Published
bi-monthly by Dark Horse Comics, Inc., 2008
S.E. Monroe St., Milwaukie, Oregon 97222.
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intent is purely coincidental.

FOR ONE BRIEF MOMENT
I'D FOUND LOVE. ONE
OF HICK'S GRUNTS--A
MARINE NAMED BUTLER--

WHAT IS IT ABOUT LIFE
THAT AS SOON AS YOU
FIND SOMETHING GOOD--
IT'S TAKEN AWAY FROM
YOU?



I COULD FEEL THE
PANIC RISING IN MY
CHEST. CHOKING
CLAUSTROPHOBIC.

MY FIRST INSTINCT WAS TO
HIDE--JUST LIKE ACHERON--
JUST LIKE EARTH.



THAT'S WHAT THE ENEMY
DEPENDS ON. HUMAN--
ALIEN-- THEY RELY ON
THAT FEAR TO ENDURE.

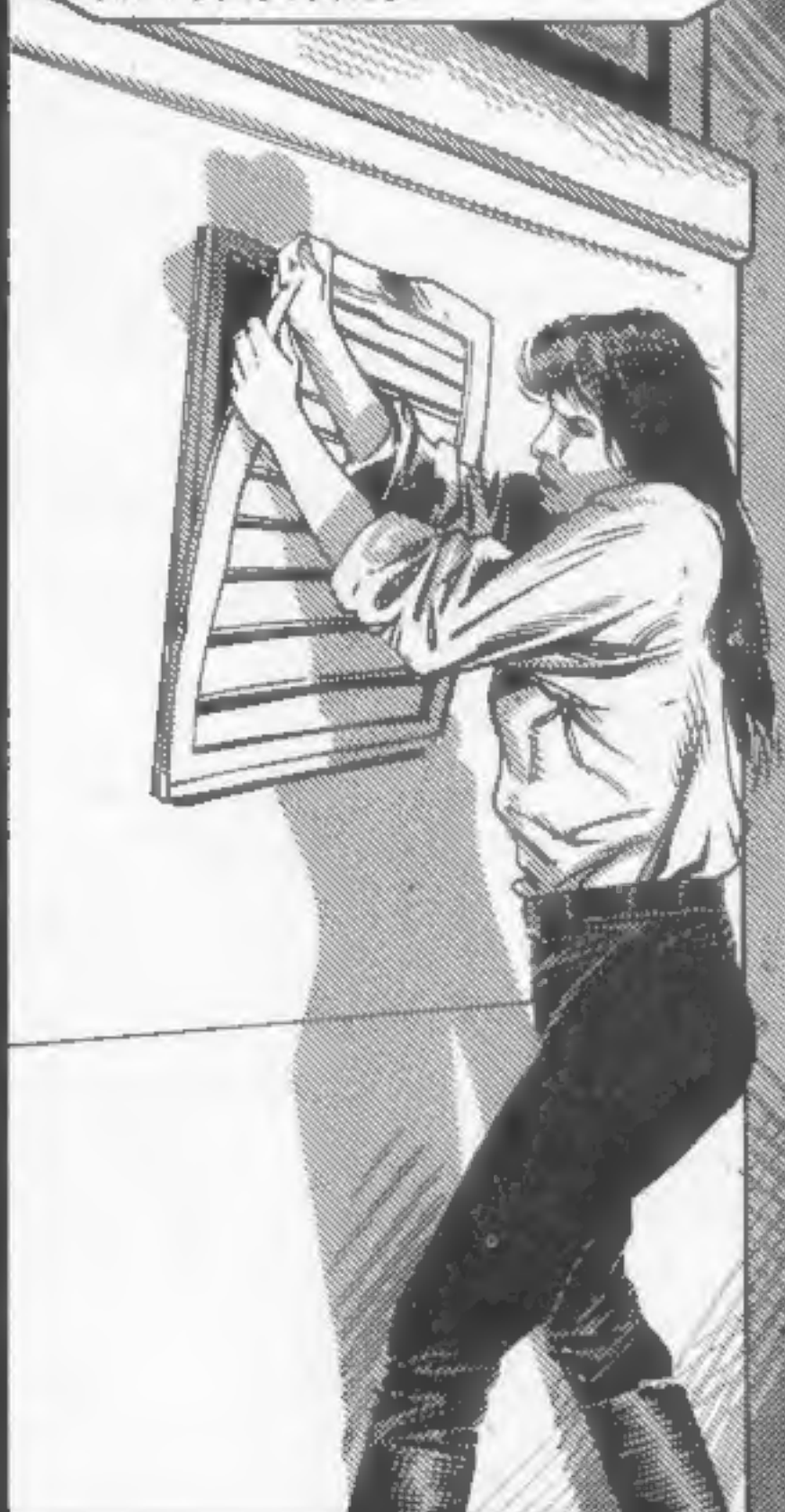


NO!



IT EXPLAINED THE
RESILIENCE OF
CREATURES LIKE
THE ALIEN.

THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND FEAR.
THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND
ANYTHING BEYOND THEIR
OWN EXISTENCE.



I KNEW I WOULD HAVE TO
BECOME LIKE THEM TO
SURVIVE.



IT HAD BEEN FOUR HOURS SINCE WE'D BEEN BOARDED. WHO THE HELL WERE THEY? SOLDIERS? MERCENARIES?

THIS WAS EASIER THAN I'D HOPED. DID YOU DOUBLE-CHECK THE INBOARD ROSTER?

STEPHENS ACED BENSON AND MEEKER AND DUMPED THE BODIES BEFORE WE DOCKED--

THE REST OF THE COMPLEMENT IS ACCOUNTED FOR.

IT DIDN'T MATTER. IT WOULDN'T HAVE MATTERED TO THEM.

NO WONDER STEPHENS CHEWED MY ASS OVER PACKING PLASMA RIFLES. HE WAS AFRAID WE'D USE THEM AGAINST YOU.

I STILL CAN'T FIGURE WHERE THE CORPORATION FOUND THE BALLS TO INTERCEPT A GOVERNMENT SHIP ON A CLASSIFIED MISSION--

I THINK YOU'LL FIND THE CORPORATION CAPABLE OF ALMOST ANYTHING.

WE STILL BELIEVE IN FREE ENTERPRISE-- CAPITALISM. AND I'M AFRAID YOUR GOVERNMENT WANTS TO KEEP THE ALIEN LIFEFORM FOR ITSELF.

MY GOVERNMENT? YOU MAKE IT SOUND LIKE THE CORPORATION IS AN INDEPENDANT STATE--

JESUS, THOSE THINGS DESTROYED ACHERON. THINK WHAT THEY COULD DO ON EARTH--

I HAVE.

WE'RE BREEDING THEM.



YOU'LL STAY WITH ME ABOARD THE BENEDICT. YOUR MEN SEEM TO RESPECT YOU-- I MIGHT BE ABLE TO USE THAT.

YOU'VE ALREADY GOT THOSE THINGS ON EARTH--WHY NOT JUST KILL US AND BE DONE WITH IT?

OH, BUT YOU'RE GOING TO DIE-- REST ASSURED OF THAT.

BUT I'M SURE YOU UNDERSTAND THE CALL OF SCIENCE.

WE'RE CHARGED WITH INVESTIGATING THE HOMEWORLD BEFORE RETURNING TO EARTH.



"NEVER KNOW WHAT YOU MIGHT FIND. IF THEIR HOMEWORLD FOLLOWS TRADITIONAL PATTERNS, THERE'S PROBABLY SOME SORT OF ECOLOGICAL BALANCE.

"PREDATOR. PREY. LIKE EARTH--LIKE YOU AND ME.



"THE ALIEN IS A REMARKABLE LIFE FORM, BUT IT MAY NOT BE THE DOMINANT SPECIES ON ITS HOMEWORLD.

"A CORPORATION LIKE BIONATIONAL SUCCEEDS BY STAYING ONE STEP IN FRONT OF THE COMPETITION. IN FIVE YEARS THE ALIEN WILL BE OBSOLETE-- FASSE. WE'LL NEED TO FIND NEWER, SUPERIOR BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS.



"WE'RE FISHING. YOUR MARINES ARE BAIT."



WE'RE PICKING UP SOME BURN ON THE OUTER HULL-- GROUND SCANNERS ARE STARTING TO CLEAR--

JE-SUS, MASSEY--ARE YOU SEEING THIS?



YEAH. PUT DOWN NEAR THE FORMATION AND DISPATCH THE FLOATERS.

MAKE SURE ALL THE DATA RECORDERS ARE UP--THEY'RE GOING TO WANT THIS ON DISC.

THEN DROP THE MARINES AND ENJOY THE SHOW.



THE ATMOSPHERE'S MARGINAL, BUT THERE ARE ONLY ENOUGH MASKS FOR US GOOD GUYS. HELL, THOUGH, YOU'RE ROUGH, TOUGH MARINES.

YOU CAN HANDLE IT--

I STILL DON'T LIKE THIS.

COME ON--YOU READ THE DOCUMENTATION. THE ADULTS ARE A BITCH, BUT THEY'RE GROUND BASED.

ONCE THE CRABLIKE THINGS ATTACH TO A HOST, THEY GO DORMANT. WE PICK THEM UP, WE GO HOME. NO PROBLEM.

YEAH, RIGHT--NO PROBLEM.





I KNEW I WOULD HAVE TO KILL THEM.

THE DUCTS WORMED THROUGH, THE SHIP, SEPARATED BY AN INTRICATE NETWORK OF AUTOMATIC INTERIOR DOORS.

THE ALIENS USED SIMILAR TUNNELS TO ATTACK US ON ACHERON.



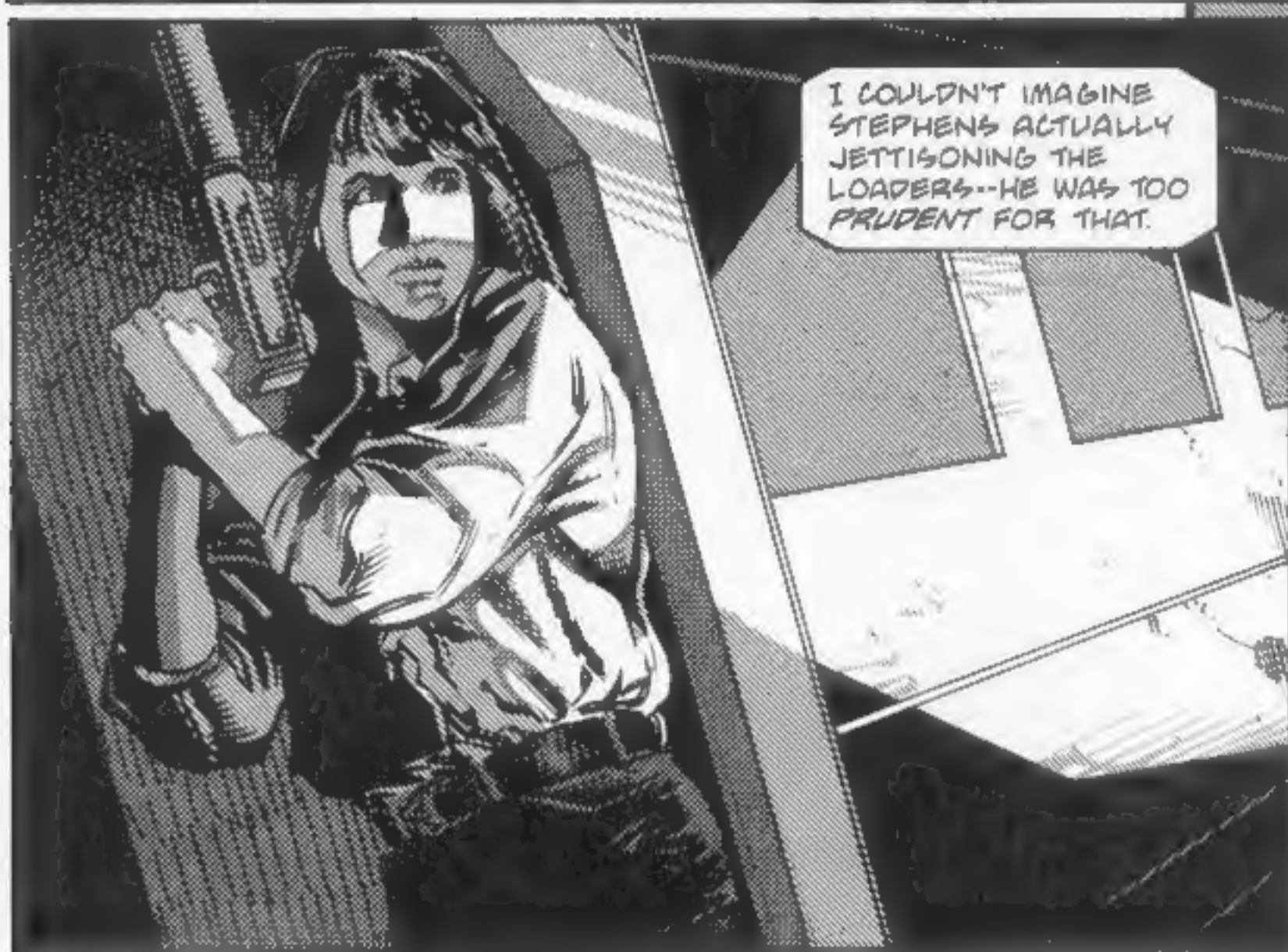
SOMEBODY PULLED THE LOADERS FROM THE MARINE'S BLASTERS, PROBABLY THAT PIECE OF SHIT STEPHENS.

I SAW WHAT WAS LEFT OF HIM SPATTERED DOWN IN THE LOADING BAY. SAVED ME THE TROUBLE.

THE INTRUDERS WERE CALM, CONFIDENT THAT THEY WERE IN COMPLETE CONTROL DESPITE RIPLEY'S WARNINGS. HICKS AND HIS MARINES MADE A SIMILAR MISTAKE ON ACHERON.

IT WAS A MATTER OF PERCEPTION. THE ALIENS WOULD HAVE UNDERSTOOD.

THE BENEDICT DIDN'T BELONG TO THOSE BASTARDS IN THE LOADING BAY. IT BELONGED TO ME.



I COULDN'T IMAGINE STEPHENS ACTUALLY JETTISONING THE LOADERS--HE WAS TOO PRUDENT FOR THAT.





DOES THIS
MAKE ANY SENSE
TO YOU? BIONATIONAL--
THE GOVERNMENT--WE'RE
ALL SUPPOSED TO BE
ON THE SAME
SIDE.

THERE'RE
NO SIDES ANYMORE--
JUST MONEY--

--AND WE'RE
EXPENDABLE.



CHRIST--I'M GETTING
BARE NOMINALS ON
ATMOSPHERE AND THE
GRUNTS ARE HARDLY
AFFECTED--

THEY'RE
ACTING LIKE
IT'S ANOTHER
DAY IN BOOT
CAMP--

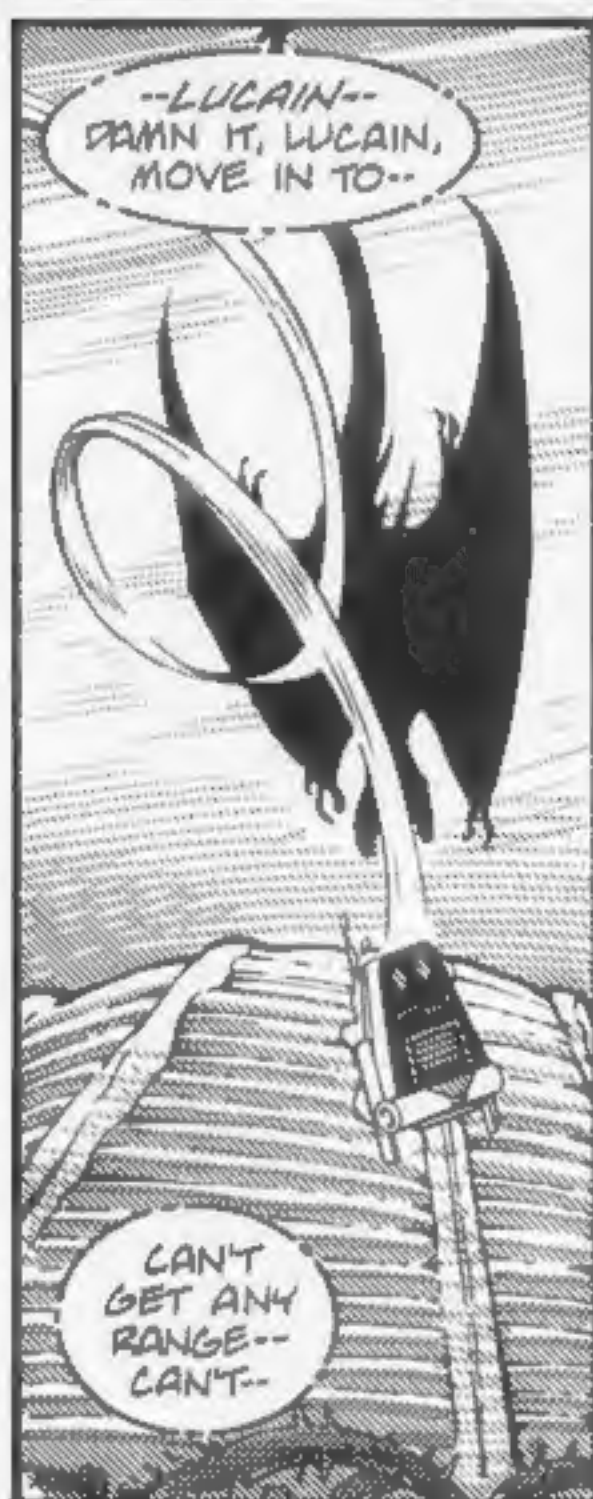
MAYBE
THEY BELIEVE ALL
THAT 'WE'RE THE BEST'
RECRUITING
SHIT--

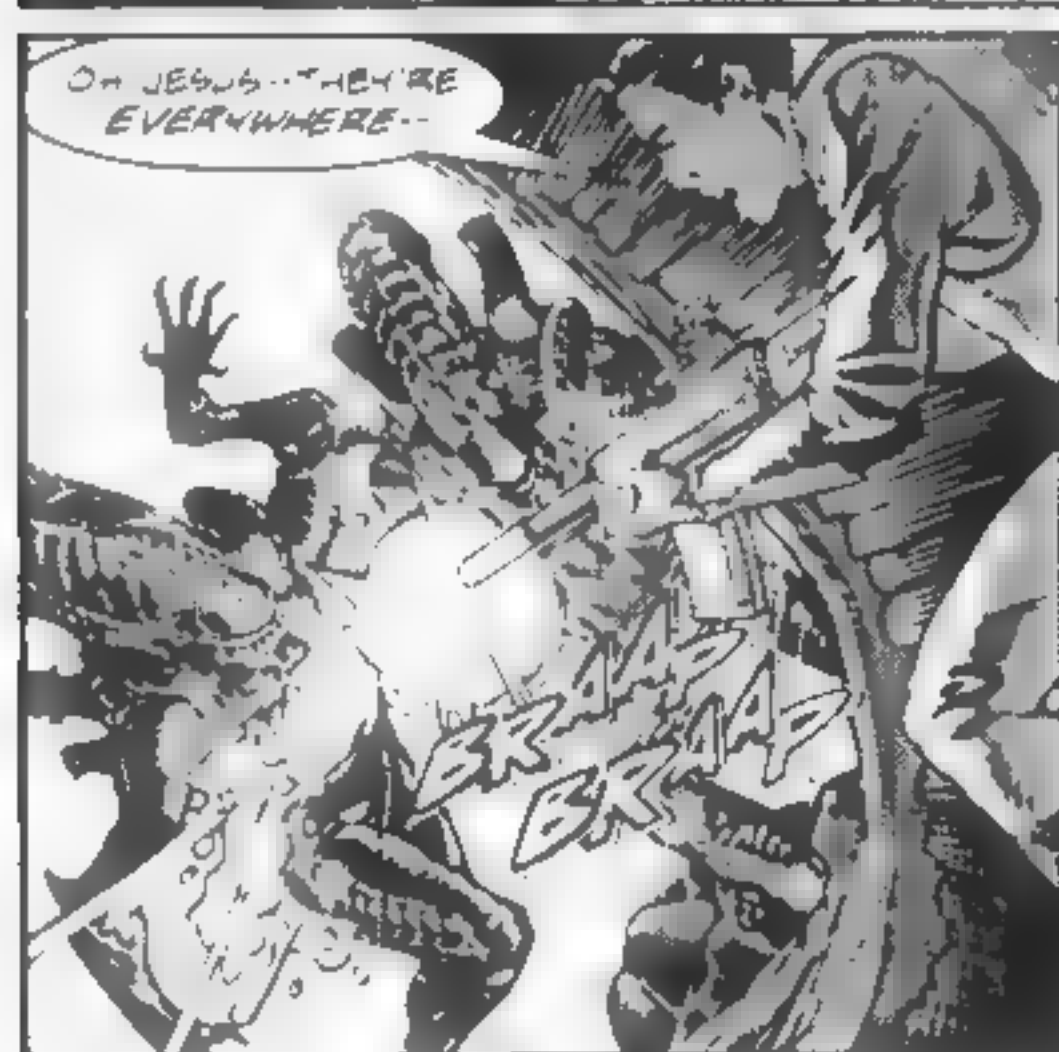


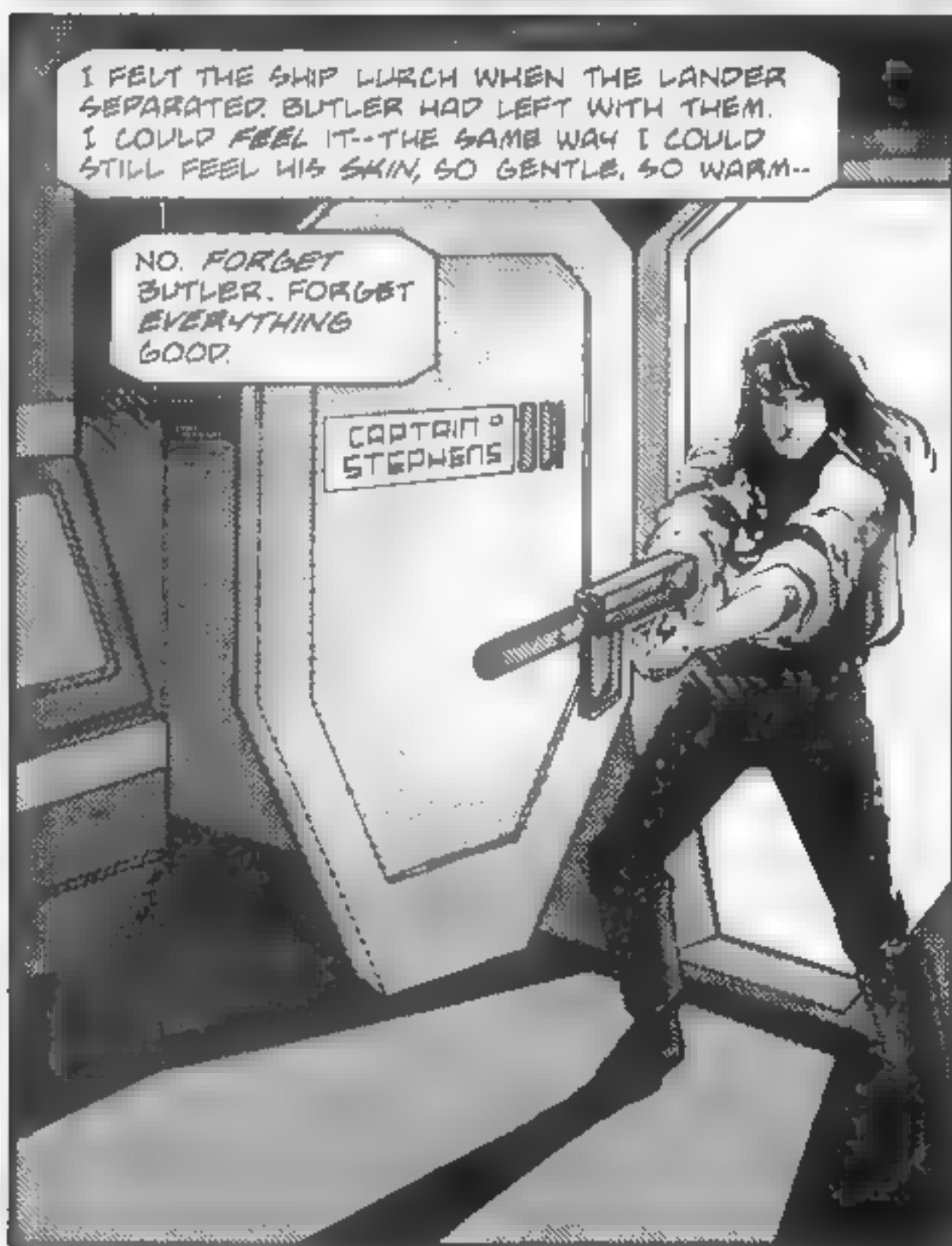
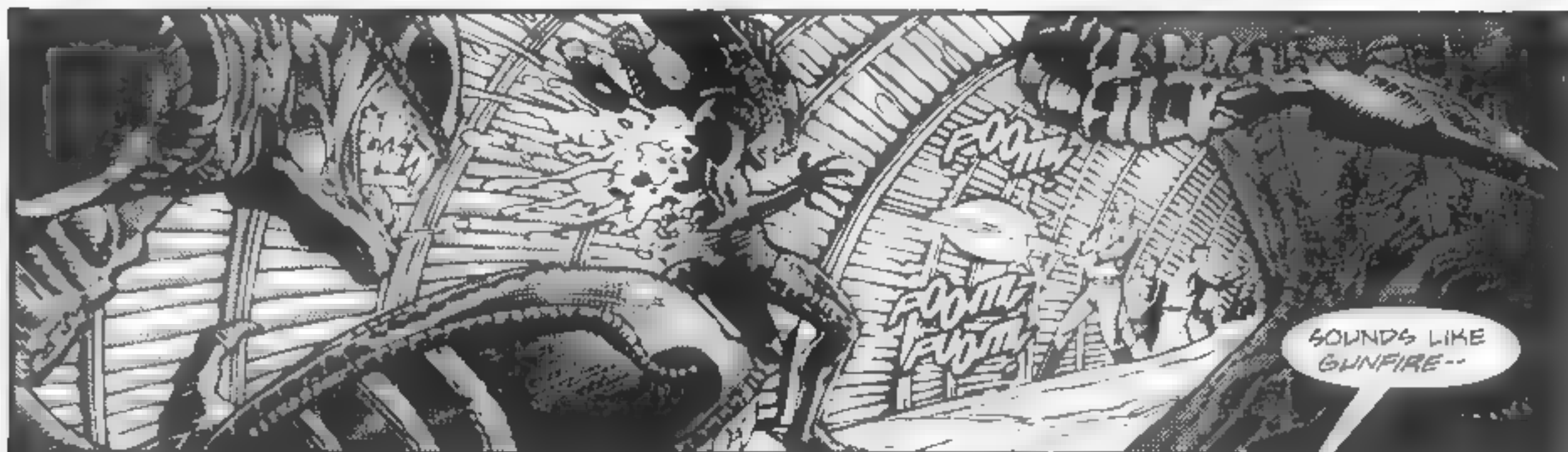
--BUT THEY
DON'T LOOK SO
MEAN FROM
HERE--

--AND WELL,
WE'VE GOT THE
BEST SEATS IN
THE HOUSE.







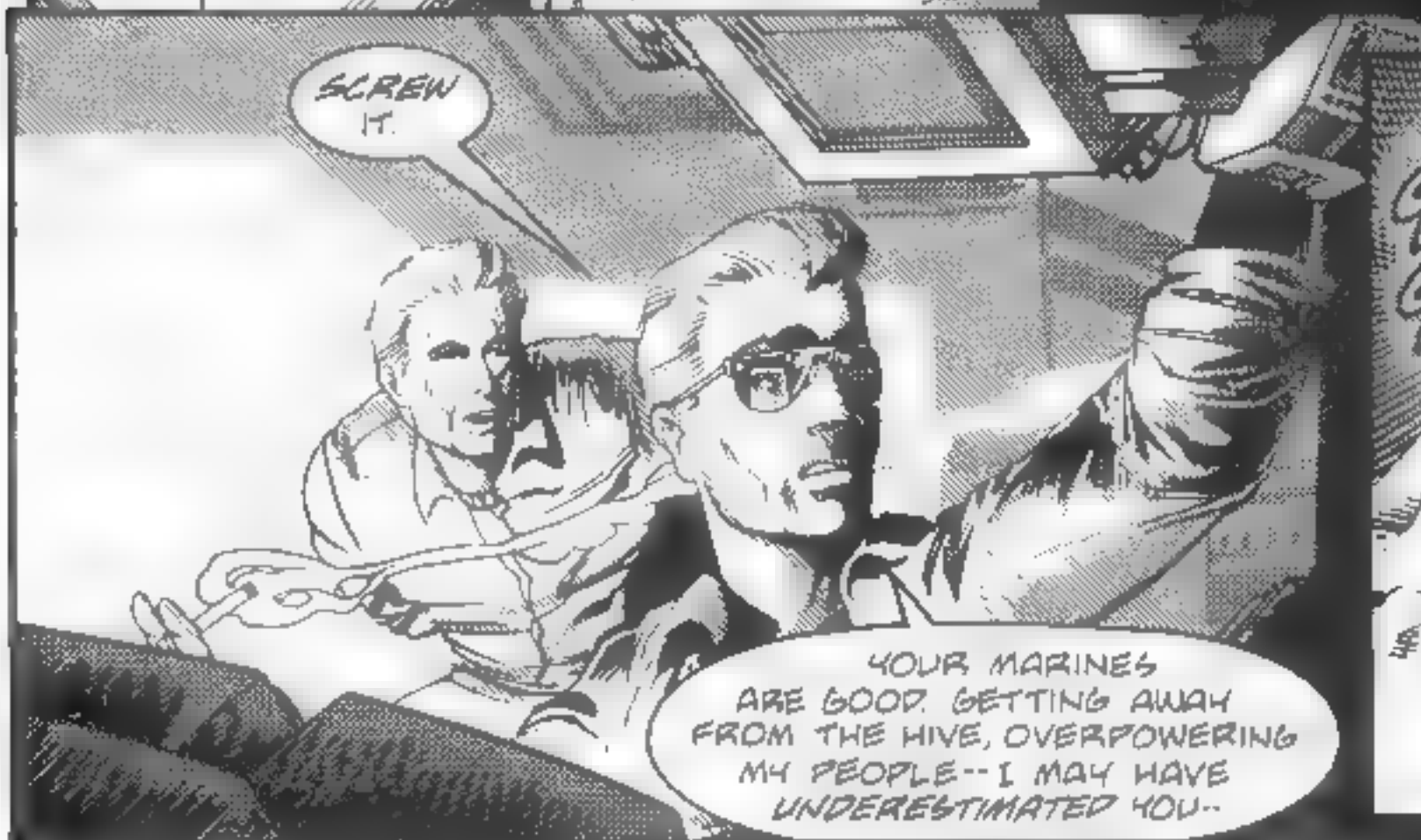




THEY'RE
ALL AROUND US--
JESUS CHRIST, WE'RE
SURROUNDED--

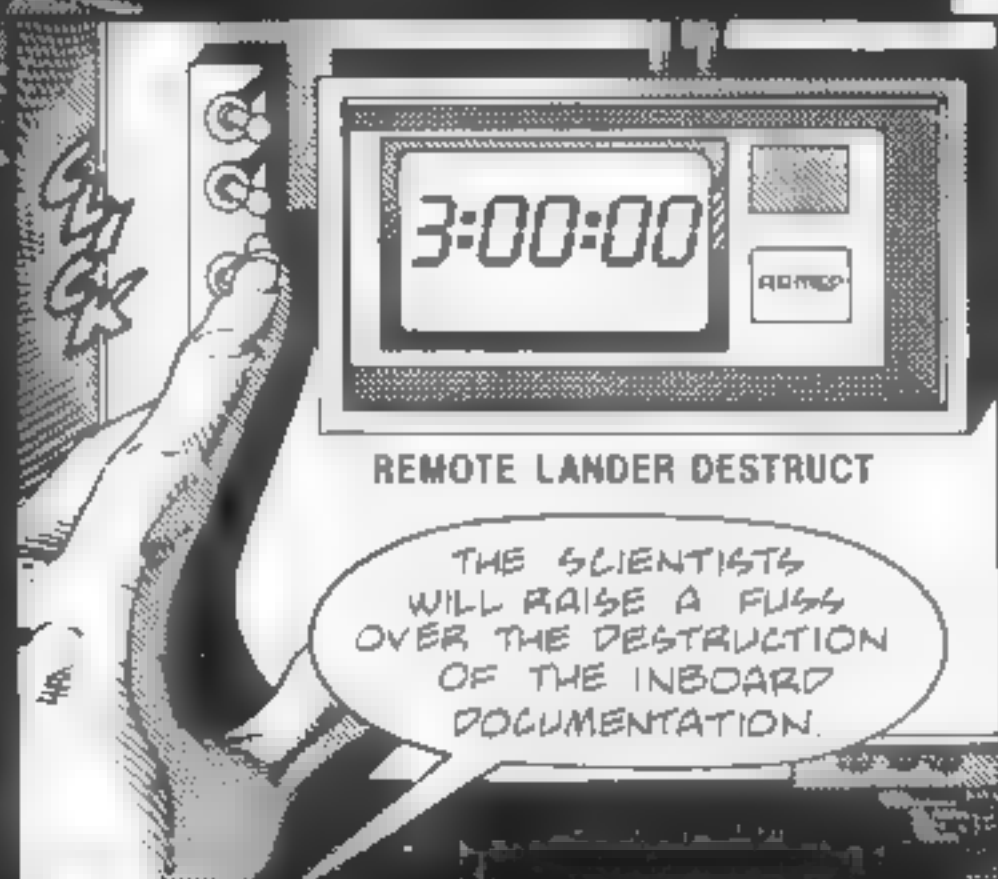


CAN BARELY
BREATHE-- MASSEY--
YOU BASTARD-- DO
SOMETHING--



SCREW
IT.

YOUR MARINES
ARE GOOD. GETTING AWAY
FROM THE HIVE, OVERPOWERING
MY PEOPLE-- I MAY HAVE
UNDERESTIMATED YOU--



3:00:00

REMOTE LANDER DESTRUCT

THE SCIENTISTS
WILL RAISE A FUSS
OVER THE DESTRUCTION
OF THE INBOARD
DOCUMENTATION.



BUT
THEY'LL GET
OVER IT.

WHAT
ABOUT YOUR
MEN?

WHAT
ABOUT
THEM?

MY
PRINCIPAL
OBJECTIVE WAS
TO KEEP THE
GOVERNMENT FROM
SECURING AN
ALIEN SPECIMEN.
MISSION
ACCOMPLISHED--



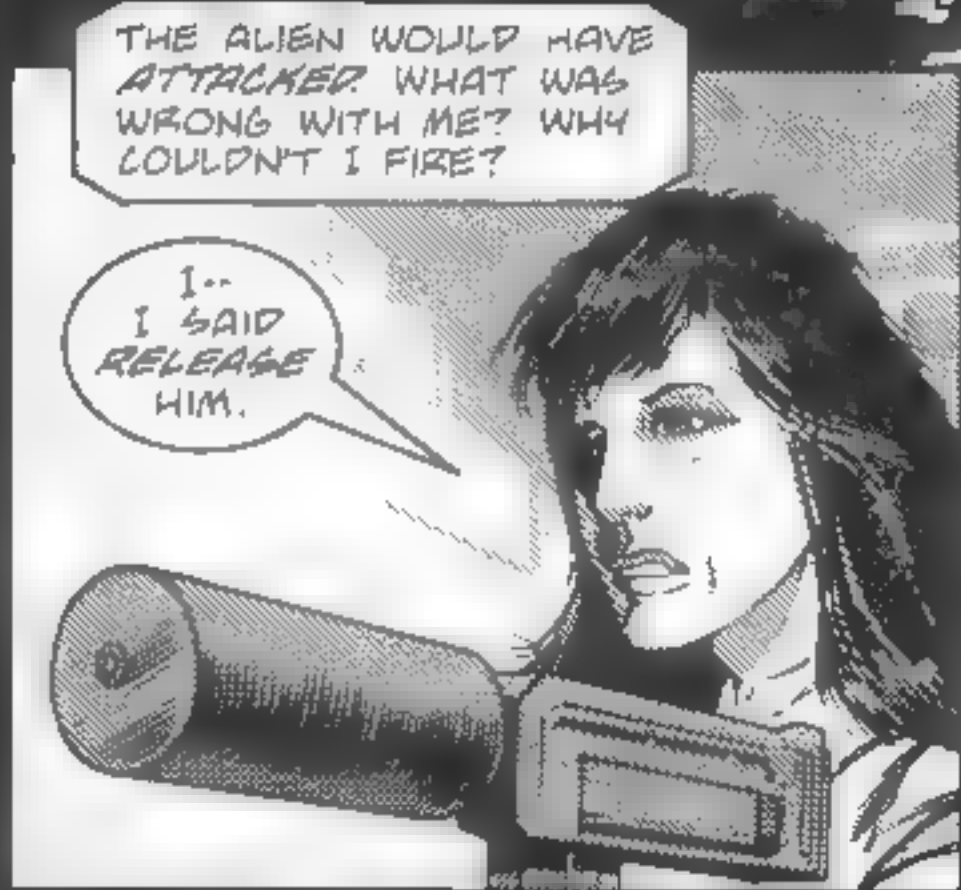
DROP IT.
YOU SON OF A
BITCH.



WELL. WE SEEM TO HAVE MISSED ONE.

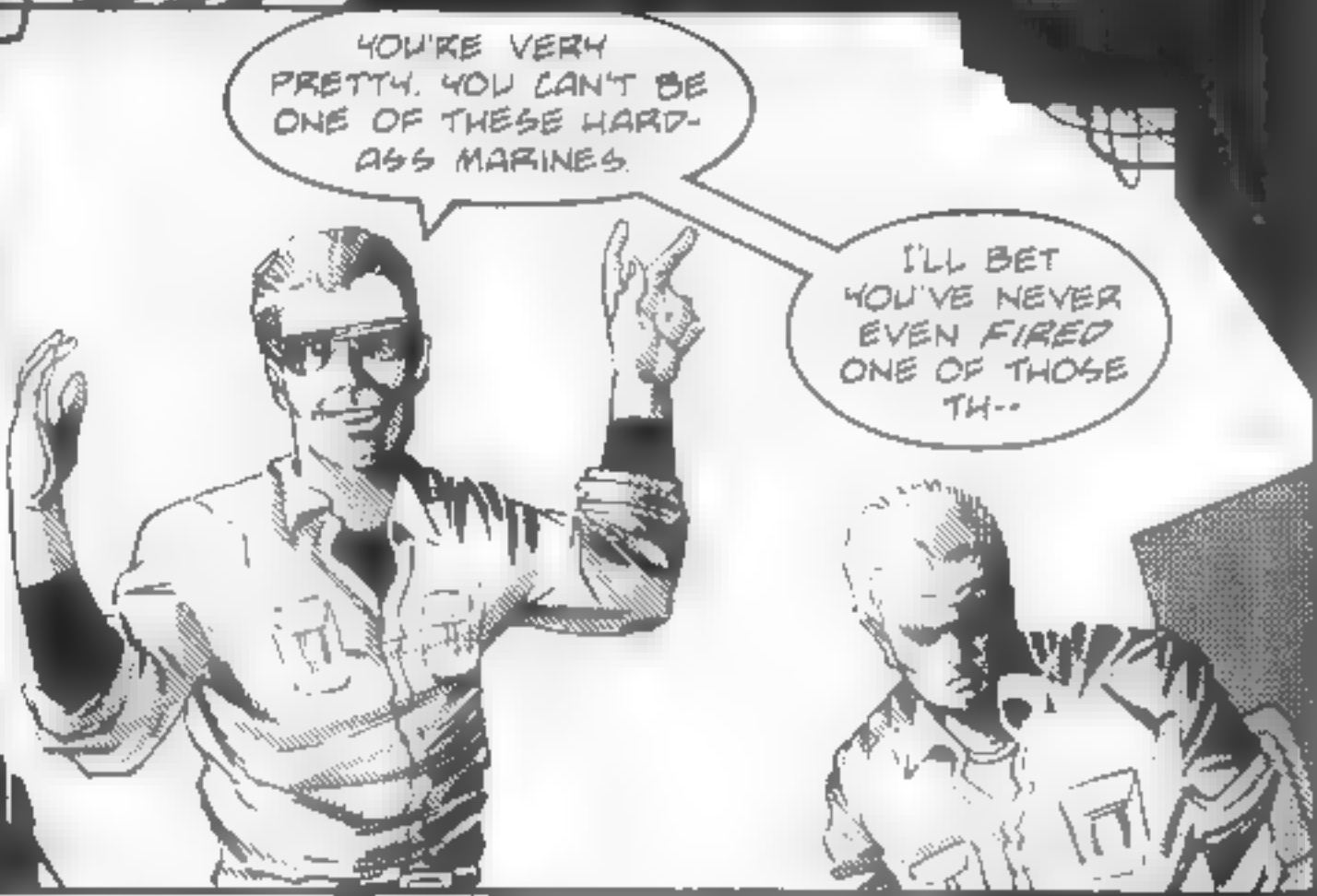
WHAT ARE YOU? SHIP'S MASLOT?

RELEASE HICKS. NOW.



THE ALIEN WOULD HAVE ATTACKED. WHAT WAS WRONG WITH ME? WHY COULDN'T I FIRE?

I-- I SAID RELEASE HIM.

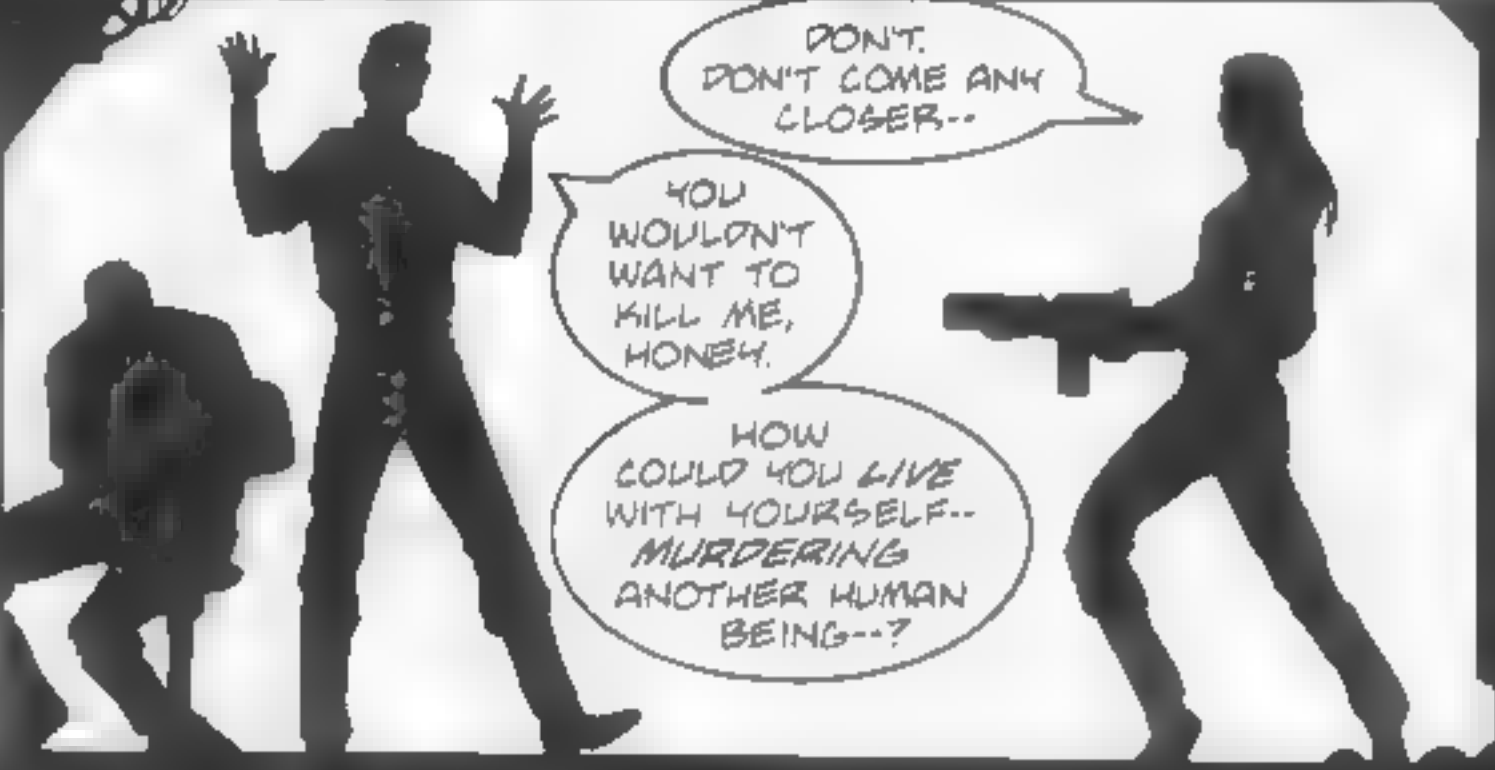


YOU'RE VERY PRETTY. YOU CAN'T BE ONE OF THESE HARD-ASS MARINES.

I'LL BET YOU'VE NEVER EVEN FIRED ONE OF THOSE TH--



SHOOT HIM, NEWT!



DON'T. DON'T COME ANY CLOSER--

YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO KILL ME, HONEY.

HOW COULD YOU LIVE WITH YOURSELF-- MURDERING ANOTHER HUMAN BEING--?

IT WASN'T FAIR. I WANTED TO BE JUST LIKE THEM.



STAY BA--



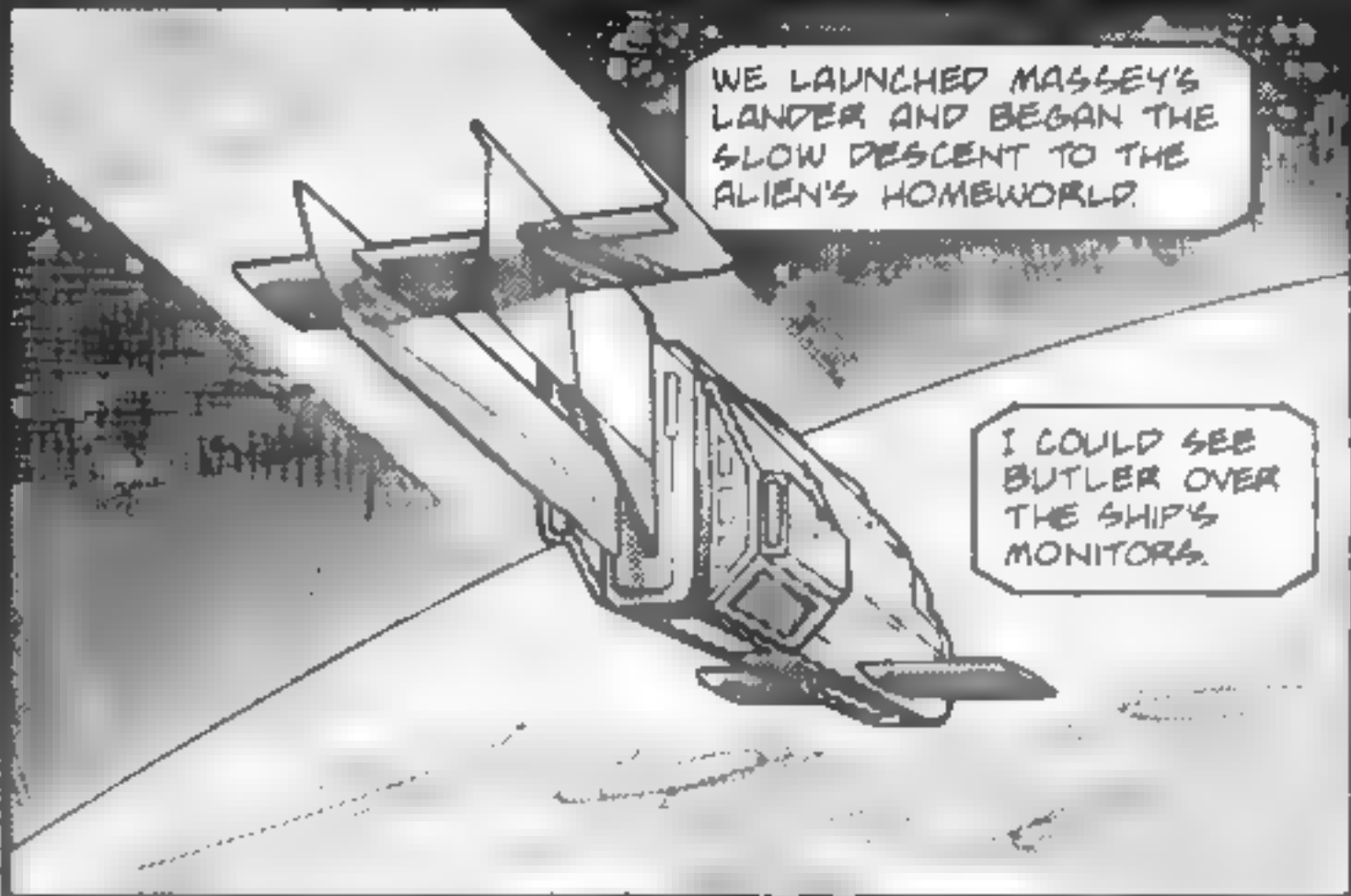
GOD HELP ME. I WAS ONLY HUMAN.











WE LAUNCHED MASSEY'S
LANDER AND BEGAN THE
SLOW DESCENT TO THE
ALIEN'S HOMELAND.

I COULD SEE
BUTLER OVER
THE SHIP'S
MONITORS.



HIS FACE WAS REDUCED TO AN
ABSTRACT BLUR--TINY ELECTRIC
PULSES OF LIGHT AND COLOR



HICKS IGNORES THE SCREENS,
LOST ■ HIS DREAMS OF
VENGEANCE. AT LEAST HE
STILL HAD THAT

I HAD
NOTHING

THERE WERE
NO DREAMS
LEFT FOR ME--

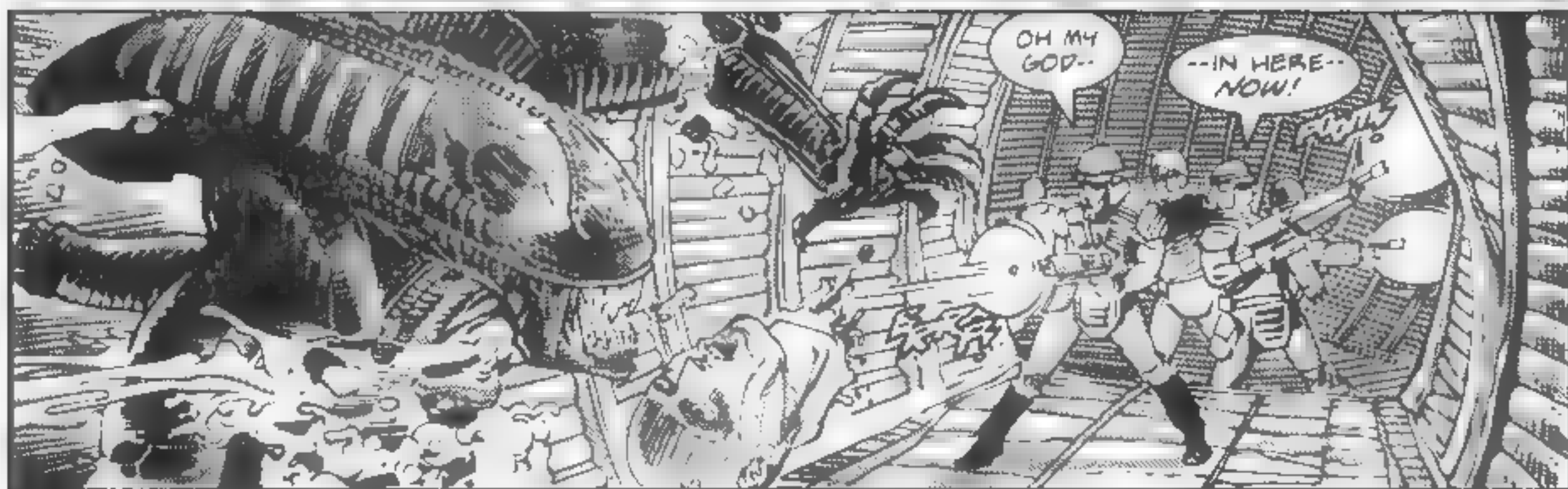


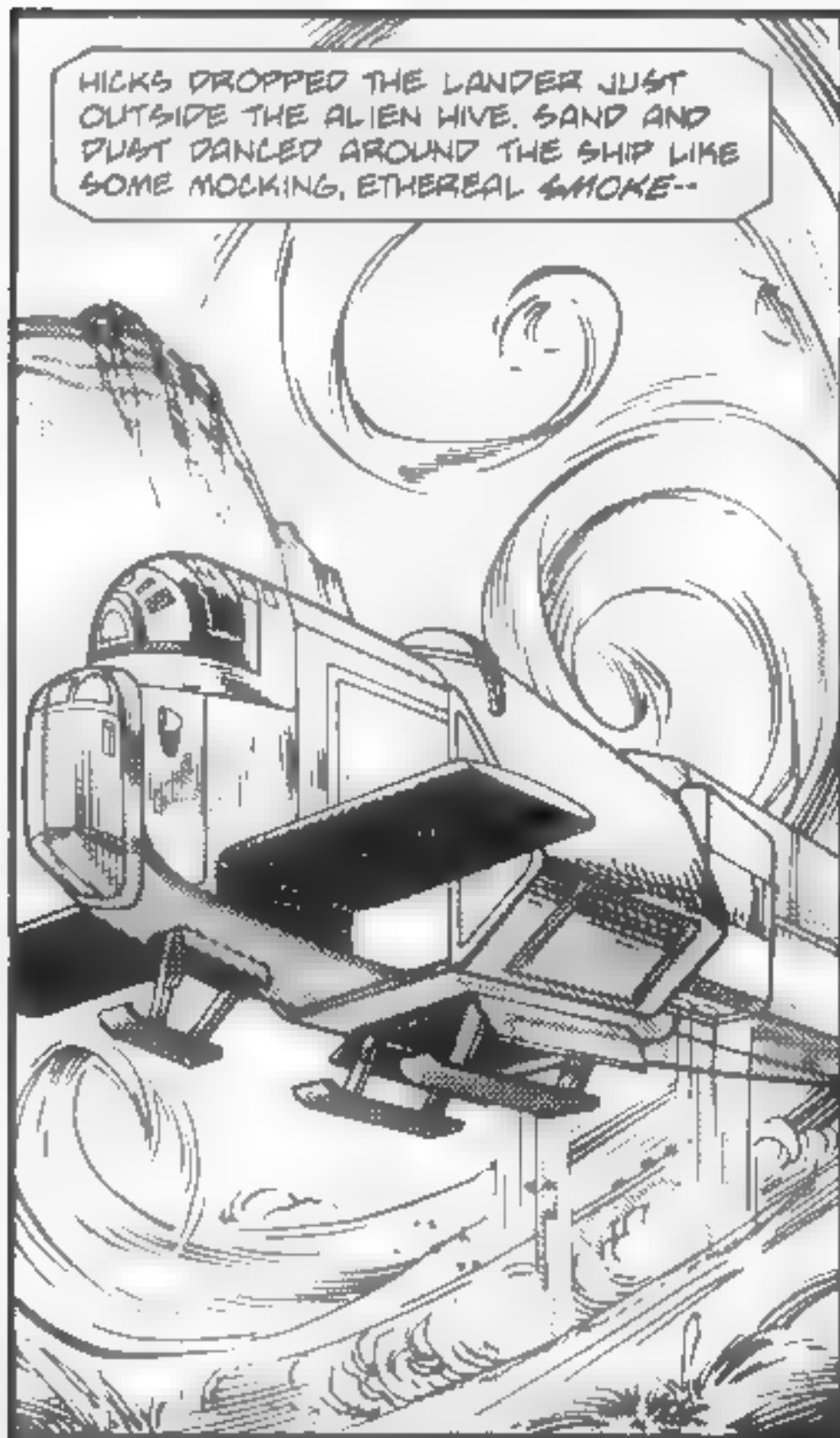
SHORT
BURSTS, DAMN IT!
CONSERVE YOUR
FIRE--!

MOTION
SENSORS ARE
OFF THE SCALE--
THEY'RE ALL
OVER US--!

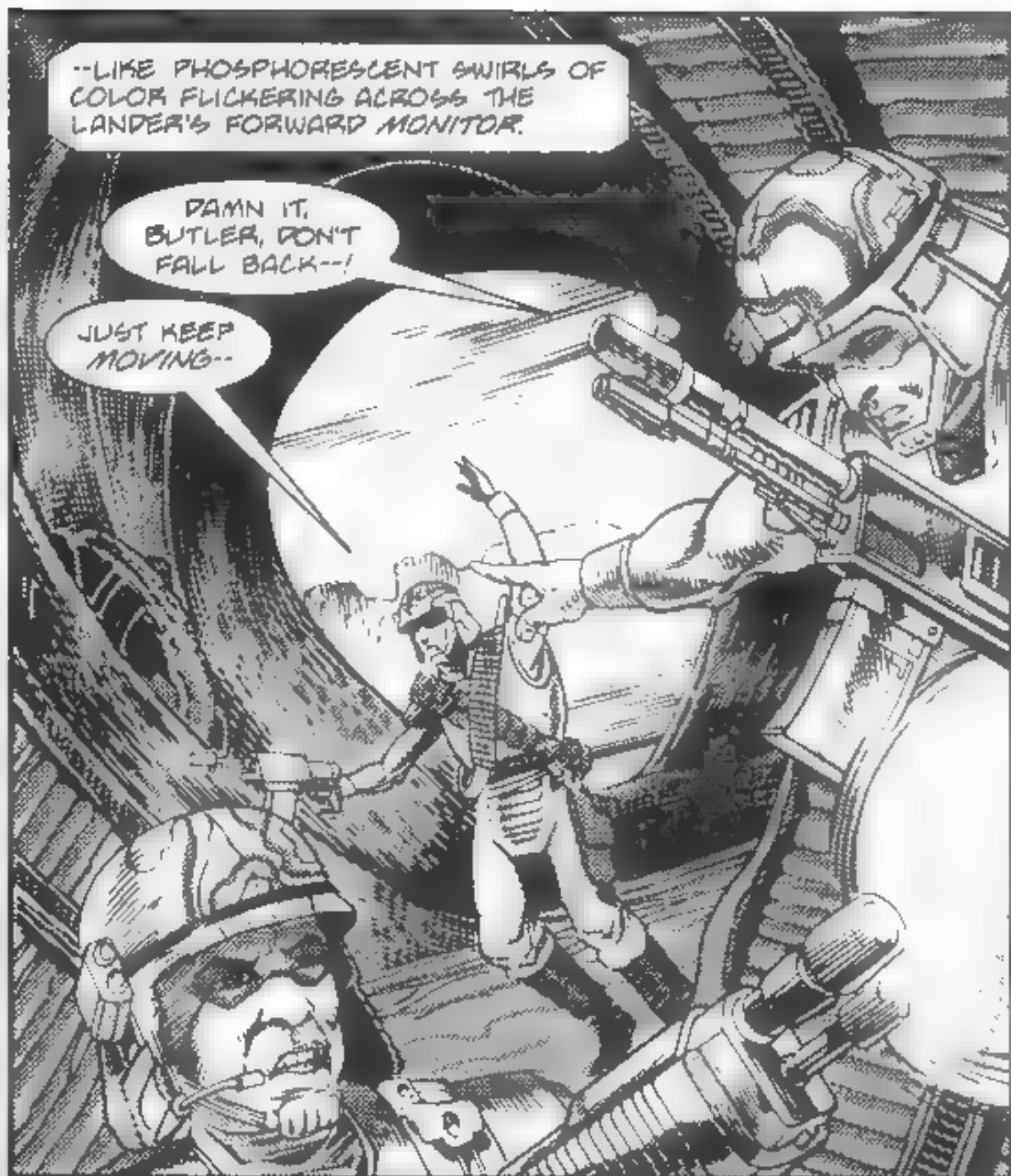
--JUST THE STARK
REALITY OF THE
ALIEN--

MOVE





HICKS DROPPED THE LANDER JUST OUTSIDE THE ALIEN HIVE. SAND AND DUST DANCED AROUND THE SHIP LIKE SOME MOCKING, ETHEREAL SMOKE--



--LIKE PHOSPHORESCENT SWIRLS OF COLOR FLICKERING ACROSS THE LANDER'S FORWARD MONITOR.

DAMN IT, BUTLER, DON'T FALL BACK--!

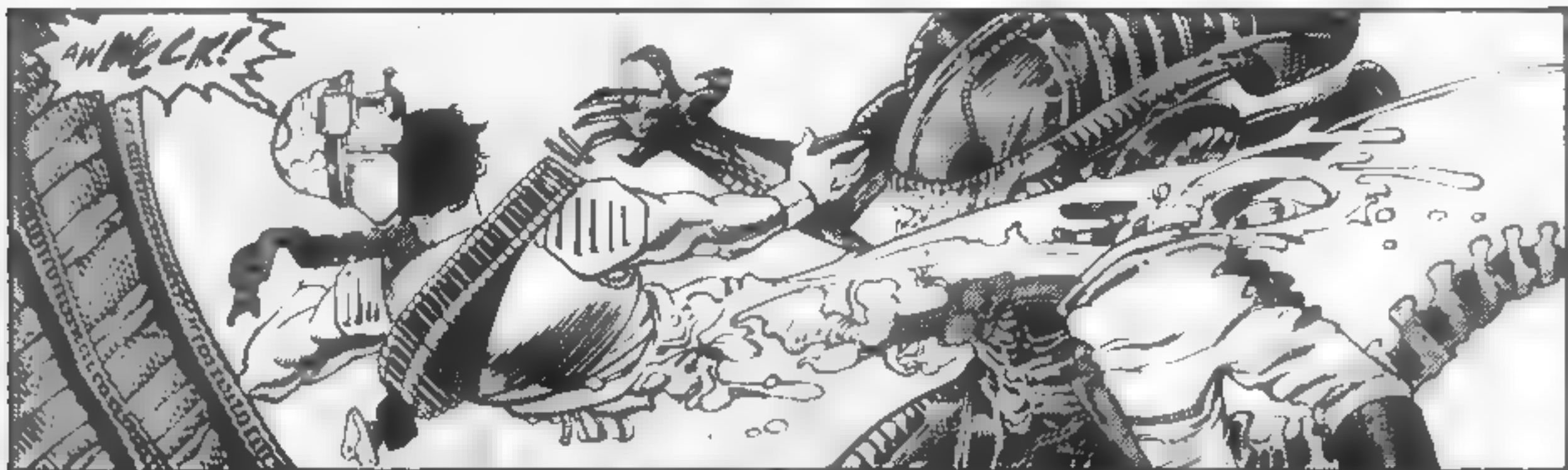
JUST KEEP MOVING--



I THINK IT KNEW. I THINK IT WANTED TO TEACH ME A LESSON ABOUT THE FUTILITY OF LOVE--THE HORROR OF TRUST--



--I COULD SEE IT ALL--



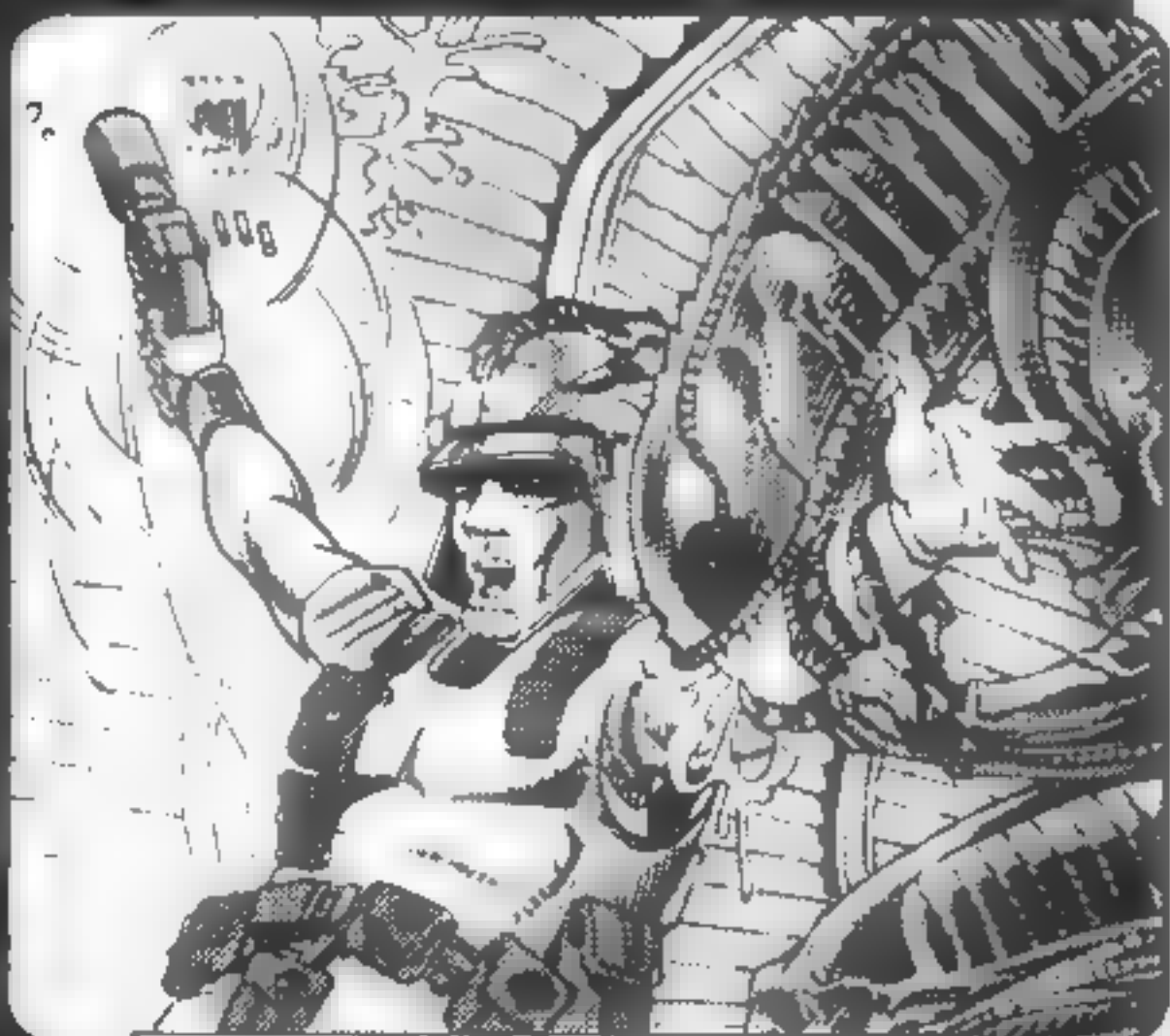


DAMN IT, NEWT--I TRIED TO
KEEP YOU AWAY FROM HIM--
FROM ALL OF THEM--

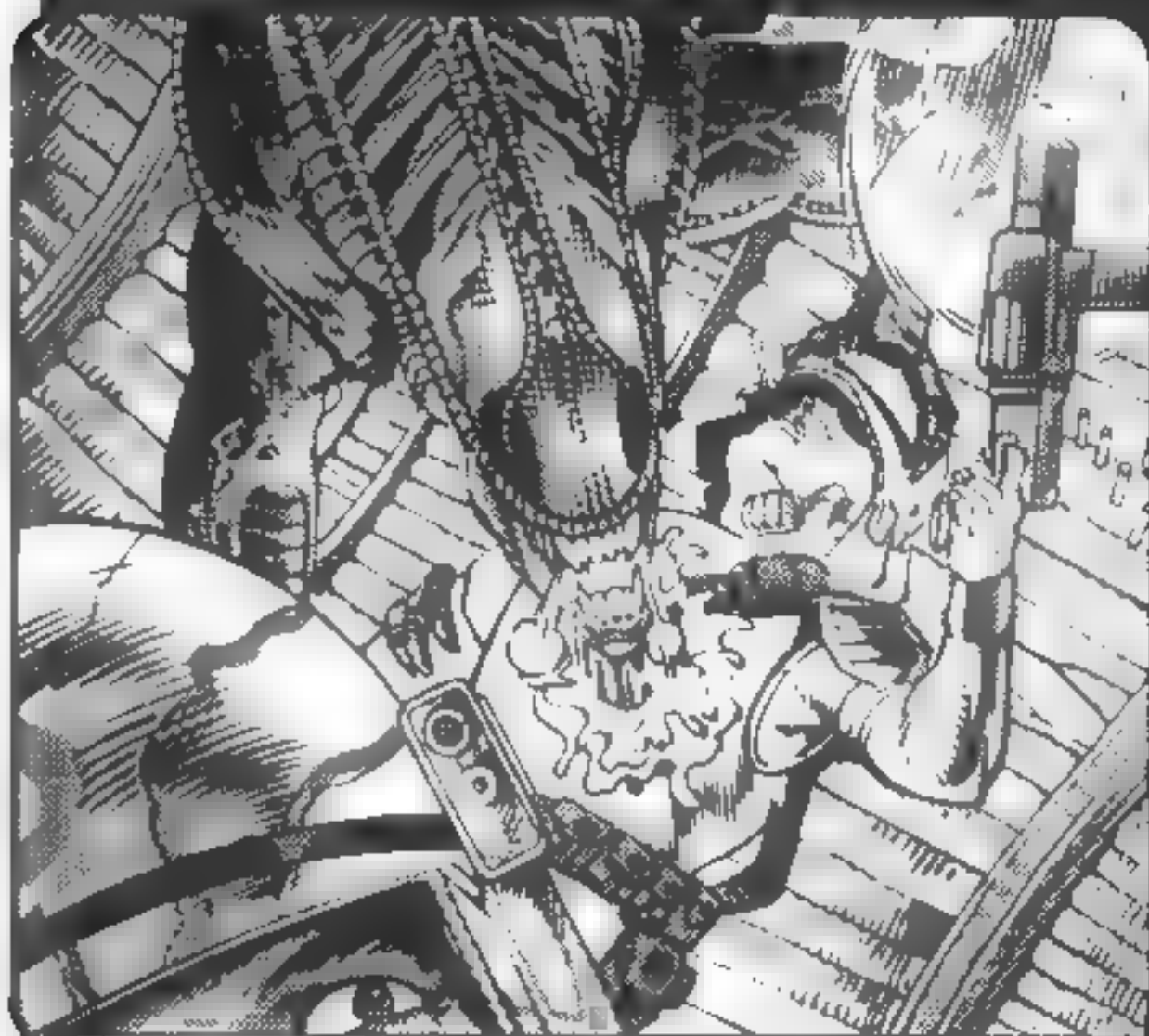
WHY DO YOU THINK THEY WENT BACK FOR THOSE
BASTARDS IN THE HIVE? THEIR PRINCIPAL
FUNCTION IS TO PRESERVE LIFE. HUMAN LIFE



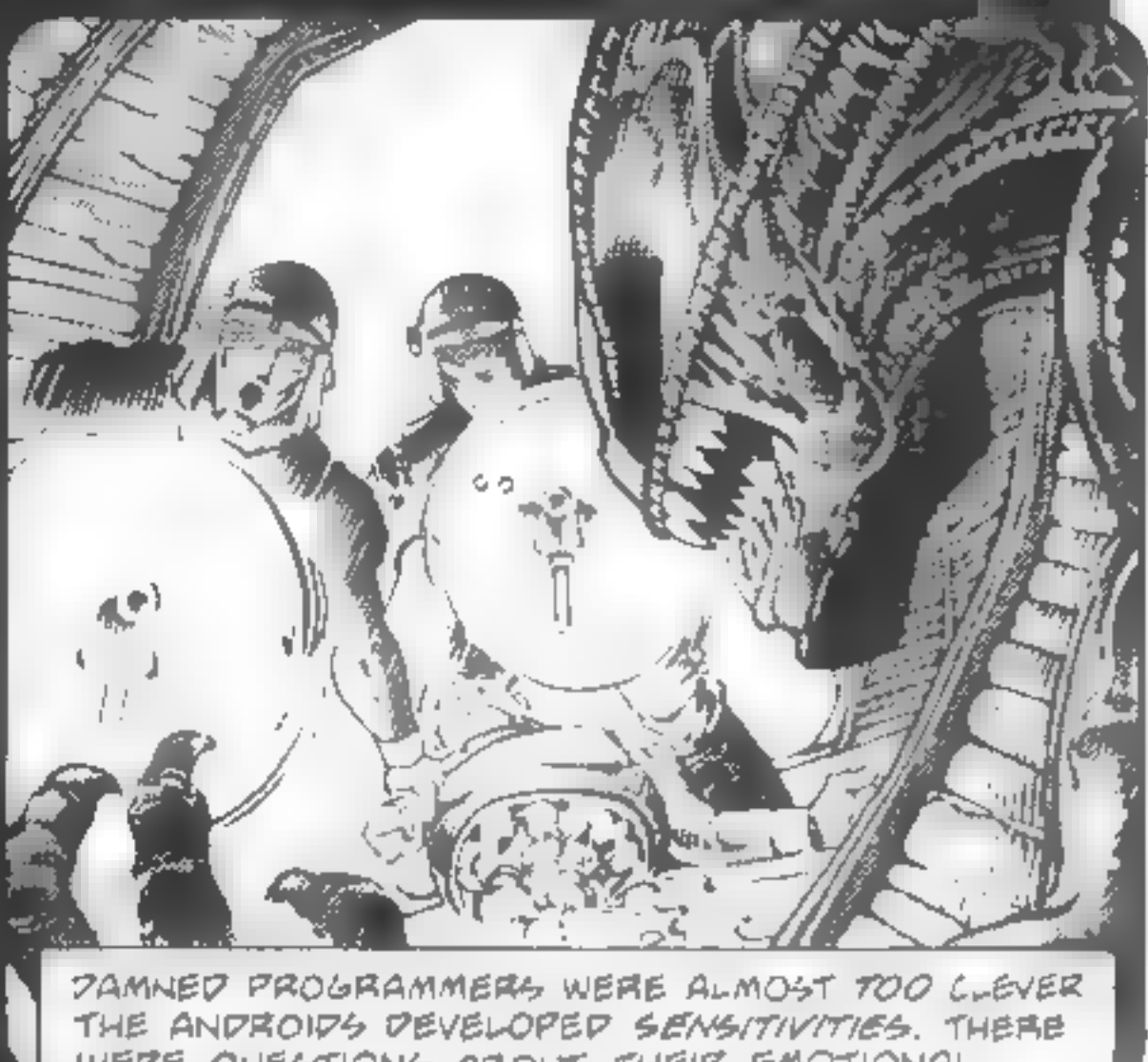
THEY WERE--ENGINEERED--JUST FOR
THIS MISSION SPENT THEIR WHOLE LIVES
LOCKED INSIDE THAT MARINE COMPOUND.
WAITING FOR THIS MOMENT.



THEY'RE LOST EFFICIENT AND
EXPENDABLE. YOU, ME, STEVENS--WE
WERE THE ONLY HUMANS ON BOARD.



THERE WERE INTERACTION PROBLEMS WITH EARLIER
MODELS--HUMANS JUST DIDN'T LIKE THEM, SO
THESE PROTOTYPES WERE DESIGNED TO SOCIALIZE--
THEY EAT LIKE US, TALK LIKE US--



DAMNED PROGRAMMERS WERE ALMOST TOO CLEVER
THE ANDROIDS DEVELOPED SENSITIVITIES. THERE
WERE QUESTIONS ABOUT THEIR EMOTIONAL
STABILITY--HOW THEY'D REACT TO THE TRUTH--

--SO WE TREATED THEM AS EQUALS--
PLAYED ALONG WITH THE DECEPTION--









AT LEAST--NOTHING HUMAN.



story concludes next issue!